



NAME: CAPT LISA TONREY

JOB TITLE: DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, SELLS SERVICE UNIT, SELLS AZ

AGENCY: INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE (IHS)

EDUCATION/DEGREES/CERTIFICATES/INSTITUTIONS:

CAPT Tonrey received her Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Rutgers University College of Pharmacy in 1980. In the late 90s, CAPT Tonrey continued to expand her clinical functions by receiving her New Mexico Pharmacist Clinician License which allows her to prescribe medications to patients under physician supervision. Then, she became a DEA Licensed Mid-level Pharmacist Provider through the New Mexico Board of Pharmacy which allows her to prescribe controlled substances with physician supervision.

CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION:

Since December 2005, CAPT Tonrey has served as the Indian Health Service (IHS) Director of Professional Services. She currently manages professional services for the Sells Service Unit in an isolated hardship area which includes a hospital, three health centers, and several mobile and school-based clinics on the Tohono O'odham Nation. CAPT Tonrey is also directly responsible for the Diabetes Program Branch, several services including Optometry, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Medical Imaging, Nutrition Dietetic, and the Electronic Health Record. She also serves as the coordinator for the IHS Chronic Disease Management Collaborative Grant. All of these responsibilities help her to improve access to health care in isolated areas. For example, in optometry, access improved by sending out a mobile unit 10 months each year for patients seeking eye care.

QUALIFYING SKILLS FOR CURRENT POSITION:

CAPT Tonrey has obtained extensive clinical and supervisory experience throughout her career beginning in 1980 when she served as a clinical staff pharmacist at the USPHS Hospital in San Francisco, California. In 1981, the USPHS experienced a reduction in force (RIF) and closed all PHS hospitals. At that point, she took a position in the private sector as a clinical staff pharmacist at Letterman Army Medical Center in San Francisco, where she specialized in sterile products and parenteral nutrition with an emphasis on neonates and critical care patients. During her 11 years of private sector experience, CAPT Tonrey worked as an oncology specialist at Health Center Pharmacy at the University of Vermont, and later as a manager of Presbyterian Healthcare Services in New Mexico where she designed and established the center's pharmacy department.

Upon hearing that the Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop was revitalizing the USPHS, CAPT Tonrey returned to the USPHS in 1992. The diversification of assignments (employed at local, regional, and national levels) have gifted her with the experience and perspective necessary in understanding the “big picture” of healthcare in order to achieve the mission and objectives in her current position.

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE USPHS AS A CAREER:

CAPT Tonrey chose USPHS because she saw the many career opportunities and adventures the USPHS offered. She welcomes the challenges in meeting the continuous healthcare needs of the public whether they are pharmacy related or in other disciplines.

PREVIOUS USPHS ASSIGNMENTS:

Upon return to USPHS in 1992, CAPT Tonrey accepted a position with IHS as a senior pharmacist at the Albuquerque Indian Hospital in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In this position, she was able to use her well-honed clinical skills to review patient charts, evaluate drug utilization, perform patient assessments, and counsel patients. Believing that pharmacists in New Mexico could better serve their patient population with additional training, CAPT Tonrey helped to develop the first non-college based physical assessment-training program accepted by the New Mexico Board of Pharmacy. Her accomplishments earned her the American Pharmaceutical Association (APhA) Foundation Grant for Practitioner Innovation in Pharmaceutical Care in 1996.

In 1997, she accepted a position as Field Unit Director at Zia, Santa Ana, and Sandia Health Centers in Bernalillo, New Mexico. But not only was clinical practice important to CAPT Tonrey, she also understood the importance of administrative skills. So during this time, she supervised, directed and evaluated staff for the Zia, Santa Ana, and Sandia Health Centers.

In search of continuous career and personal progression, CAPT Tonrey accepted a position with USPHS Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in Dallas, Texas in 1999 where she was the Senior Program Management Officer. This career move took this officer completely out of the pharmacy and helped to expand her understanding of access to health care and grant writing. She managed five states where she developed and evaluated health care system needs and helped to coordinate programs with state and local health departments and health care organizations. At the same time, she served as the President for APhA from 2002-2005. RADM Shekar at headquarters in Rockville, MD took note of this officer and recommended her for promotion as HRSA's Northern Operations Branch Chief. In 2004, she relocated to Rockville, MD where she oversaw sixteen states (3 HHS Regions), the largest geographic region. One of her eight job descriptions entailed overseeing 250 grantees with \$296 Million in funding and a total programmatic budget of \$1.69 Billion for such programs as the Black Lung Clinics Program, Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program, and Health Care for the Homeless. She worked for headquarters for about one year until she was offered the management position with Sells Service Unit where she currently serves.

MOST REWARDING USPHS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Her most rewarding professional experience is having served at all levels of healthcare (local, regional, and national) which has provided insight on improving access to healthcare. This innovative officer states that she appreciates the opportunities afforded through Public Health Service that might not have been possible in any other sector. She states that she has had an exciting career that has involved so many different aspects of pharmacy and nonpharmacy-related medical services.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS/ACTIVITIES:

She has received numerous awards for her deployments for her response to the Terrorist Attack and Anthrax Exposure in 2002 and HRSA's Hero Award for Response to the World Trade Center Disaster in 2001. This outstanding officer has also served as Presidential Officer for APHA, which she credits as one of her most notable pharmacy accomplishments. Other memberships include: New Mexico Society of Health System Pharmacists (NMSHP), Commissioned Officers Association (COA) and Association of Military Surgeons of the US (AMSUS). She has also been published numerous times in Pharmacy Today and Journal of Asthma.

Her advice to junior officers is to introspect each year during annual evaluations assessing the need for personal/professional growth and to set new goals at that time. If officers don't feel the environment is conducive to growth, then it is time to change to an environment that will foster career progression. She urges others to take charge of their personal and professional destiny.

By LCDR Jessica Evans and LCDR Elaine Hu